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1 Nov 62

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



FACTORS AFFECTING SHIPMENT
OF
MISSILE SYSTEMS FROM CUBA

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THIS MATERIAL CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECT-
ING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES
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TITLE 18, USC, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, THE TRANSMIS-
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OCI No. 3600/62

1 November 1962

FACTORS AFFECTING SHIPMENT OF
MISSILE SYSTEMS FROM CUBA

1. If Moscow has given the order to dismantle and remove Soviet offensive weapons systems from Cuba, the time necessary for final implementation of such an order will be governed by the availability of Soviet ships suitable for return transport of the ballistic missile units. We believe three weeks would be the minimum time required for the proper Soviet ships to reach Cuba and load missile cargoes. It is more likely that at least four weeks would be required to accomplish this.

2. The MRBM/IRBM systems being installed in Cuba involve Soviet equipment which would be valued at between a quarter and a third of a billion dollars in US terms. They also represent a military capability that Moscow would not wish to jeopardize even though the systems were removed from Cuba. Therefore, for both economic and military reasons, this equipment probably would be carefully packed and shipped back to the USSR in a manner designed to prevent damage. The Soviets, therefore, would not willingly carry these missiles on ships which were not able to stow them below deck in the same way they were originally brought to Cuba.

3. At least seven Soviet ships capable of carrying MRBMs/IRBMs have been identified so far among the ships carrying military equipment to Cuba.

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4. None of the suspect missile carriers are now near Cuba. Five of the seven ships capable of carrying missiles were among those which turned back from their voyages to Cuba on 23 October. They probably were carrying additional missiles and related equipment at that time. Several of these ships only recently arrived back in Soviet ports and the rest probably will be in by the end of the week. Assuming the cargoes originally destined for Cuba are immediately unloaded, all seven possible missile carriers could be en route back to Cuba in ballast by the beginning of next week--around 4/5 November. Several could have started by now, but thus far we have no evidence that any of them are under way. Once under way, the trip back to Cuba would take about two weeks, putting them in Cuban ports between 16 and 25 November. Loading of missiles, missile equipment, and bombers probably would take another week, although this could be started as soon as the first ships arrived.

5. The ballistic missile units in Cuba are road-transportable and designed for rapid, efficient movement from one location to another. For example, under alert conditions an MRBM unit is capable of dismantling, packing up, and moving from its siting area within a few hours from the time such an order is given. However, under the circumstances in Cuba we would expect that after an order to dismantle were given, several days would be taken to dismantle the sites, carefully pack and prepare for shipment the missiles and all of the unit support and related equipment, and to carry out such operations as securing the area. We do not know what disposition might be made of the permanent facilities which have been constructed. Movement of equipment from the existing sites to port areas--the Mariel area for the San Cristobal and Guanajay sites and La Isabela for the Sagua la Grande and Remedios sites--would require about a day. Units could bivouac in the port areas, if necessary, while awaiting the arrival of suitable Soviet ships.

6. The removal of the 29 or more IL-28 jet light bombers based at San Julian airfield would be complicated by the apparent breaking up and possible burning of some of the crates used to ship them to Cuba. At

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least six of these aircraft have been uncrated so far [redacted] To disassemble and re-crate them for shipment probably would take at least a week--quite possibly longer. The availability of transport would govern the rate of the move back to the Mariel/Havana area for loading. The trip would take about a day by road. Altogether, it is likely that at least a week and possibly a week and a half would be required to get these bombers into a port of embarkation. The shipping problem, however, would not be as difficult with the IL-28s as with the missiles; they could probably be carried by three ships. There are enough ships of this type now in Cuban ports or in the vicinity.

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